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the same as those of the Massorites, agreeing in many cases to the slightest shades. This punctuation must have taken its rise somewhere in the East, and has accordingly been named the Assyrian system.¹⁶ Our present system is a native of the West, perhaps Tiberias. The MS. in which the Assyrian appears bears date 916. But from inspecting it, it can be seen at once that the particular system with which it is accented was not the only one known to the accentuators, but was beginning to give way before another, the Tiberian. Double punctuation occurs in several cases, and the first three verses of Malachi have been pointed quite according to our mode of punctuation.

These facts seem to indicate, beyond the reach of controversy, that the determination of the Jewish mind in the direction of vocalization and accentuation was not a determination peculiar to the western or Palestinian Jews, but common to them with their eastern or Assyrian countrymen. They show that the mere invention of symbols was a thing of comparatively modern date, and that the symbols took different forms in different regions. They show further that while different families constructed different systems of symbols, and worked independently, though contemporaneously, at giving sensuous form and outward expression to their tradition, it was yet a common tradition which they labored to express. So that while we cannot hesitate to believe in the comparatively modern rise of our present signs, we have every reason to consider ancient and primitive the pronunciation and declaration which they so successfully signify.¹⁷

CRITICAL+NOTES.

Inverted Nuns in the Bible.—Inverted Nūns are found in Ps. 107, between the 22d and 28th verses and in Num. 10, 35–36; see the larger Massorah on Ps. 107, and Num. 10. These abnormal and singular marks are of a very high antiquity; they were already in use several centuries before the vowel-signs and accent-signs were added to the consonant-text of the Bible. They are mentioned and commented upon in the Bab. Talmud Rosh-Hashanah 17 b. and Shabbath 116 a., in Sifrē ad Num. l. c., in Gen. Rabba chap. 64. During the Massorites' period and soon thereafter the statements and explanations concerning these marks multiply considerably. They are more or less spoken of in Tr. Sof^rim 6, 1, 2; Aboth d^rrabbi Nathan 34; Pesikta Zuṭratha ad Num. 10, in Nathan Romi's Talmudic Lexicon Arukh s. v. אָךְ; by Hai Gaon (quoted in Maggid Mishneh ad Maimon. Yad Hāzakah, Shabb. 11, 10); by Rashi in his commentaries on the Bible and Talmud passages under consideration; and in many other places. In the Talmud these marks are called סִימְנוֹת *signs*; in Sifrē, נְרוּדוֹת, *points*; in Sof^rim, שִׁפּוּר, *ornamentations*; by the Massorites and subsequent authors, נֻנִּים הַפּוֹכִים or נֻנִּין מְנוּרוֹת, *inverted nuns*. But what is the meaning of these strange signs?

¹⁶ Babylon war das Saatfeld für die meisten Gattungen der jüdischen Litteratur. Fürst, Kultur u. Literaturgeschichte der Juden in Asien, p. 2, quoted by Donaldson, Jashar, p. 18, note.

¹⁷ See the arguments for the late origin of the punctuation, excellently stated (in addition to the books already mentioned) in Gesenius, Geschichte der Heb. Sprache, Abschnitt iii., B., p. 182 folg.; Jahn, Einleitung, § 96, s. 340, folg.; also Hävernik, Einleitung, i., 1, s. 304 ff., who borrows from Rupfeld. Also briefly, Horne's Introduction by Davidson, vol. ii., p. 18 and foll.

Already Talmud and Sifrê remark, they were to denote that the verses were not in their proper order. And why not? The oldest explanation, which is almost unanimously accepted by the later exegetes, we find in Rosh-Hashanah l. c. There it is stated that these "signs"—and consequently the disorder of the verses—have the same meaning as the Hebrew particles **אך** and **רק** have; that is, they indicate a restrictive and limitative sense in which the verses are to be taken. So, f. in Ps. 107, 28 we read, "They cried unto the Lord when they were in distress, and He brought them out of their affliction." Not always, however, were they delivered, remarks the Talmud, only when their prayers were sent up in proper times, a fulfillment of them was granted. Similarly in regard to the inverted Nûns in Numbers the Jewish doctors of the second century—if not earlier—said, that the verses 35 and 36 in chapter 10, would more properly have found their position in another part of the Scriptures, but that they were inserted here in order to separate the accounts of two unfortunate events in Israel's history. Rabbi Jehuda, the Naši, and his cotemporary, Bar Qappara (towards the end of the second century) and still earlier Rabbi Jonathan and others considered the two verses, included by the peculiar Nûn-signs, as a book by itself, the preceding part of Numeri they counted as a whole book, and the other part following chapter 10, 36 as another book. And so it was in those early days a widely adopted opinion that the Torah was in reality not a *Pentateuch*, but a *Heptateuch* (Tr. Shabbath and Gen. Rabba ut supra; Levit. Rabba chapter 11; Rashi, Naḥmanides, Solomon Norzi and others on Num. 10, 35, etc.). The Pharisaic law recorded in Mishnah Yadayim 3, 5 (which, in all likelihood, originated in times anterior to Christianity) also presupposes a Heptateuch, as it considered the two verses, above specified, as a **ספר**, a book by itself.

It deserves notice perhaps that, according to some, there should also be an inverted Nûn in "**חרן**," the last word of Gen. chap. 11. see Rashi and Minḥath Shāy ad l., also the Marginal Massorah in a few Bible editions. But it is very doubtful whether there is any good substantiation for it. The elder Talmudic and Midrashic literature does not know anything of *this* inverted Nûn. Tr. Sofrim, where one would naturally look first for a mention of it, is silent in regard to it. So are, Rashi excepted, all the commentaries. The printed editions of the Hebrew Bible, with the exception of *very* few, have the regularly formed final Nûn. And the written Torah-scrolls which are kept in the Synagogues for ritualistic purposes, and which have to be of the most rigid correctness, *must* have on this place the regular final Nûn, according to existing ecclesiastical requirements; and should an inverted Nûn be found in said word **בחרן**, the same would have to be erased and corrected before the Scroll would again be considered proper to read therefrom publicly.

B. FELSENTHAL.

Some Emendations to the Text of Samuel.—(1) **יֵרֶדְדָּרָךְ** 1 Sam. iv. 13. Read **יֵרֶדְדָּרָךְ**, by the side of the way toward Mizpah, near to which the battle took place that proved so unfortunate for the Israelites; for (cf. vii. 12) Samuel set up the memorial stone between Mizpah and **הַשָּׁן**, at the place where (cf. iv. 1) the camp of the Israelites had stood.

(2) xvi. 12. Instead of the intolerable **עַם-יִפְהָ** we should read "**עַלֵּם**."